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# CORRECTED REPORT

OF

# SPEECHES

DELIVERED BY THE

# RIGHT HON. GEORGE CANNING,

IN THE

# HOUSE OF COMMONS,

DECEMBER 12, 1826,

ON THE MOTION FOR AN

# ADDRESS TO THE KING,

IN ANSWER TO HIS MAJESTY'S MESSAGE

RELATIVE TO THE

# AFFAIRS OF PORTUGAL.

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# CORRECTED REPORT

OF

# SPEECHES, &c.

# THE KING'S MESSAGE.

"GEORGE R.

"His Majesty acquaints the House of Commons that His Majesty has received an earnest application from the Princess Regent of Portugal, claiming, in virtue of the ancient obligations of alliance and amity between His Majesty and the Crown of Portugal, His Majesty's aid against an hostile aggression from Spain.

"His Majesty has exerted himself for some time past, in conjunction with His Majesty's Ally, the King of France, to prevent such an aggression, and repeated assurances have been given by the Court of Madrid of the determination of his Catholic Majesty neither to commit, nor to allow to be committed from his Catholic Majesty's territory, any aggression against Portugal; but His Majesty has learned, with deep concern, that notwithstanding these assurances, hostile inroads into the territory of Portugal have been concerted in Spain, and have been executed under the eyes of Spanish Authorities by Portuguese Regiments, which had deserted into Spain, and which the Spanish Government had repeatedly and solemnly engaged to disarm and to disperse.

"His Majesty leaves no effort unexhausted to awaken the Spanish Government to the dangerous consequences of this apparent connivance.

"His Majesty makes this communication to the House of Commons with the full and entire confidence, that his faithful Commons will afford to His Majesty their cordial concurrence and support in maintaining the faith of treaties, and in securing against foreign hostility the safety and independence of the kingdom of Portugal, the oldest ally of Great Britain. "G. R."

MR. SECRETARY CANNING moved the Order of the Day, for taking into consideration His Majesty's gracious Message.

The Message was then read.

MR. SECRETARY CANNING.

Mr. Speaker,—

In proposing to the House of Commons to acknowledge, by an humble and dutiful Address, His Majesty's most gracious Message, and to reply to it in terms which will be, in effect, an echo of the sentiments, and a ful filment of the anticipations of that Message, I feel that, however confident I may be in the justice, and however clear as to the policy of the measures therein announced, it becomes me as a British Minister, recommending to Parliament any step which may approximate this Country even to the hazard of a war, while I explain the grounds of that proposal, to accompany my explanation with expressions of regret.

I can assure the House, that there is not within its walls any set of men more deeply convinced than his Majesty's Ministers,—nor any individual more intimately persuaded than he who has now the honour of addressing you,—of the vital importance of the continuance of peace, to this Country and to the

World. So strongly am I impressed with this opinion—and for reasons of which I will put the House more fully in possession before I sit down—that, I declare, there is no question of doubtful or controverted policy—no opportunity of present national advantage—no precaution against remote difficulty,—which I would not gladly compromise, pass over, or adjourn, rather than call on Parliament to sanction, at this moment, any measure which had a tendency to involve the Country in war. But, at the same time, Sir, I feel that which has been felt, in the best times of English history, by the best Statesmen of this Country, and by the Parliaments by whom those Statesmen were supported—I feel that there are two causes, and but two causes, which cannot be either compromised, passed over, or adjourned. These causes are, adherence to the national faith, and regard for the national honour.

Sir, if I did not consider both these causes as involved in the proposition which I have this day to make to you, I should not address the House, as I now do, in the full and entire confidence that the gracious communication of His Majesty will be met by the House with the concurrence of which His Majesty has declared his expectation.

In order to bring the matter, which I have

to submit to you, under the cognizance of the House, in the shortest and clearest manner, I beg leave to state it, in the first instance, divested of any collateral considerations. It is a case of law and of fact:—of national law on the one hand, and of notorious fact on the other; such as it must be, in my opinion, as impossible for Parliament as it was for the Government, to regard in any but one light; or, to come to any but one conclusion upon it.

Among the Alliances by which, at different periods of our history, this Country has been connected with the other nations of Europe, none is so ancient in origin, and so precise in obligation,—none has continued so long and been observed so faithfully,—of none is the memory so intimately interwoven with the most brilliant records of our triumphs, as that by which Great Britain is connected with Portugal. It dates back to distant centuries; it has survived an endless variety of fortunes. Anterior in existence to the accession of the House of Braganza to the throne of Portugal,—it derived, however, fresh vigour from that event; and never, from that epoch to the present hour, has the independent Monarchy of Portugal ceased to be nurtured by the friendship of Great Britain. This Alliance has never been seriously interrupted; but it has been renewed

by repeated sanctions. It has been maintained under difficulties by which the fidelity of other Alliances was shaken, and has been vindicated in fields of blood and of glory.

That the Alliance with Portugal has been always unqualifiedly advantageous to this Country,—that it has not been sometimes inconvenient and sometimes burdensome,—I am not bound nor prepared to maintain. But no British Statesman, so far as I know, has ever suggested the expediency of shaking it off: and it is assuredly not at a moment of need, that honour, and what I may be allowed to call national sympathy, would permit us to weigh, with an over-scrupulous exactness, the amount of difficulties and dangers attendant upon its faithful and steadfast observance. What feelings of national honour would forbid, is forbidden alike by the plain dictates of national faith.

It is not at distant periods of history, and in by-gone ages only, that the traces of the union between Great Britain and Portugal are to be found. In the last compact of modern Europe, the compact which forms the basis of its present international law—I mean the Treaty of Vienna of 1815,—this Country, with its eyes open to the possible inconveniences of the connection, but with a memory awake to its past benefits,—solemnly re-

newed the previously existing obligations of alliance and amity with Portugal. I will take leave to read to the House the Third Article of the Treaty concluded at Vienna in 1815, between Great Britain on the one hand, and Portugal on the other. It is couched in the following terms:—"The Treaty "of Alliance concluded at Rio de Janeiro, on "the 19th of February, 1810, being founded "on circumstances of a temporary nature, "which have happily ceased to exist, the said "Treaty is hereby declared to be void in all "its parts, and of no effect; *without prejudice, "however, to the ancient Treaties of alliance, "friendship, and guarantee, which have so long "and so happily subsisted between the two Crowns, "and which are hereby renewed by the High "Contracting Parties, and acknowledged to be "of full force and effect.*"

In order to appreciate the force of this stipulation,—recent in point of time, recent also in the sanction of Parliament,—the House will perhaps allow me to explain shortly the circumstances in reference to which it was contracted. In the year 1807, when, upon the declaration of Buonaparte—that the House of Braganza had ceased to reign,—the King of Portugal, by the advice of Great Britain, was induced to set sail for the Brazils;

almost at the very moment of His Most Faithful Majesty's embarkation, a Secret Convention was signed between His Majesty, and the King of Portugal, stipulating that, in the event of His Most Faithful Majesty's establishing the seat of his Government in Brazil, Great Britain would never acknowledge any other Dynasty than that of the House of Braganza on the throne of Portugal. That Convention, I say, was contemporaneous with the migration to the Brazils; a step of great importance at the time, as removing from the grasp of Buonaparte the Sovereign Family of Braganza. Afterwards, in the year 1810, when the seat of the King of Portugal's Government was established at Rio de Janeiro, and when it seemed probable, in the then apparently hopeless condition of the affairs of Europe, that It was likely long to continue there, the Secret Convention of 1807, of which the main object was accomplished by the fact of the emigration to Brazil, was abrogated; and a new and public Treaty was concluded, into which was transferred the stipulation of the Convention of 1807, binding Great Britain, so long as His Faithful Majesty should be compelled to reside in Brazil, not to acknowledge any other Sovereign of Portugal than a member of the

House of Braganza. That stipulation which had hitherto been *secret*, thus became *patent*, and part of the known law of nations.

In the year 1814, in consequence of the happy conclusion of the war, the option was afforded to the King of Portugal of returning to his European dominions. It was then felt, that, as the necessity of His Most Faithful Majesty's absence from Portugal had ceased, the ground of the obligation originally contracted in the Secret Convention of 1807, and afterwards transferred to the patent Treaty of 1810, was removed. The Treaty of 1810 was therefore annulled at the Congress of Vienna; and in lieu of the stipulation not to acknowledge any other Sovereign of Portugal than a member of the House of Braganza, was substituted that which I have just read to the House.

Annulling the Treaty of 1810, the Treaty of Vienna renews and confirms, (as the House will have seen,) all *former* Treaties between Great Britain and Portugal; describing them as "ancient Treaties of alliance, friendship, and guarantee;" as having "long and happily subsisted between the two Crowns;" and as being allowed, by the two High Contracting parties, to remain "in full force and effect."

What then is the force—what is the effect of

those ancient Treaties?—I am prepared to show to the House what it is. But before I do so, I must say, that if all the Treaties to which this Article of the Treaty of Vienna refers, had perished by some convulsion of nature, or had, by some extraordinary accident, been consigned to total oblivion, still it would be impossible not to admit, as an incontestable inference from this Article of the Treaty of Vienna alone, that in a moral point of view, there is incumbent on Great Britain, a decided obligation to act as the effectual defender of Portugal. If I could not shew the letter of a single antecedent stipulation, I should still contend that a solemn admission, only ten years old, of the existence at that time of "Treaties of Alliance, Friendship, and Guarantee," held Great Britain to the discharge of the obligations which that very description implies. But fortunately there is no such difficulty in specifying the nature of those obligations. All the preceding Treaties exist; all of them are of easy reference; all of them are known to this Country, to Spain, to every Nation of the civilized world. They are so numerous, and their general result is so uniform, that it may be sufficient to select only two of them to shew the nature of all.

The first to which I shall advert is the Treaty

of 1661, which was concluded at the time of the marriage of Charles the Second with the Infanta of Portugal. After reciting the marriage, and making over to Great Britain, in consequence of that marriage, first, a considerable sum of money, and secondly, several important places; some of which, as Tangier, we no longer possess; but others of which, as Bombay, still belong to this Country,—the Treaty runs thus:—"In consideration of all which grants, so much to "the benefit of the King of Great Britain, "and his subjects in general, and of the delivery of those important places to his said "Majesty, and his heirs for ever, &c. the "King of Great Britain does profess and declare, with the consent and advice of his "council, that he will take the interest of "Portugal and all its dominions to heart, "defending the same with his utmost power, "by sea and land, *even as England itself*;"—and it then proceeds to specify the succours to be sent, and the manner of sending them.

I come next to the Treaty of 1703; a Treaty of Alliance contemporaneous with the Methuen Treaty which has regulated for upwards of a century the commercial relations of the two Countries. The Treaty of 1703, was a tripartite engagement between the States-General of Holland, England, and Portugal. The

second Article of that Treaty sets forth, that "if ever it shall happen that the Kings of "Spain and France, either the present or the "future, that both of them together, or either "of them separately, shall make war, or give "occasion to suspect that they intend to make "war upon the kingdom of Portugal, either on "the continent of Europe, or on its dominions "beyond seas; Her Majesty the Queen of "Great Britain and the Lords the States-"General, shall use their friendly offices with "the said Kings, or either of them, in order to "persuade them to observe the terms of peace "towards Portugal, and not to make war "upon it." The third Article declares, that, in the event of these "good offices not proving "successful, but altogether ineffectual, so that "war should be made by the aforesaid Kings, "or by either of them, upon Portugal, the "above-mentioned Powers of Great Britain "and Holland, shall make war with all their "force, upon the foresaid Kings or King "who shall carry hostile arms into Portugal: "and towards that war which shall be carried "on in Europe, they shall supply 12,000 men, "whom they shall arm and pay, as well when "in quarters as in action; and the said High "Allies shall be obliged to keep that number "of men complete, by recruiting it from time "to time at their own expence."

I am aware, indeed, that with respect to either of the Treaties which I have quoted, it is possible to raise a question—whether, variation of circumstances or change of times may not have somewhat relaxed its obligations. The Treaty of 1661, it might be said, was so loose and prodigal in the wording;—it is so unreasonable, so wholly out of nature, that any one Country should be expected to defend another, "*even as itself*;"—such stipulations are of so exaggerated a character, as to resemble effusions of feeling rather than enunciations of deliberate compact. Again, with respect to the Treaty of 1703, if the case rested on that Treaty alone, a question might be raised, whether or not, when one of the contracting parties,—Holland,—had since so changed her relations with Portugal, as to consider her obligations under the Treaty of 1703 as obsolete,—whether or not, I say, under such circumstances the obligation on the remaining party be not likewise void. I should not hesitate to answer both these objections in the negative. But without entering into such a controversy, it is sufficient for me to say, that the time and place for taking such objections, was at the Congress at Vienna. Then and there it was, that if you indeed considered these Treaties as obsolete, you ought frankly and fearlessly to have declared them

to be so. But then and there, with your eyes open, and in the face of all modern Europe, you proclaimed anew the ancient Treaties of alliance, friendship, and guarantee, "so long subsisting between the Crowns of Great Britain and Portugal," as still "acknowledged by Great Britain," and still "of full force and effect." It is not, however, on specific Articles alone,—it is not so much, perhaps, on either of these ancient Treaties, taken separately,—as it is on the spirit and understanding of the whole body of Treaties, of which the essence is concentrated and preserved in the Treaty of Vienna, that we acknowledge in Portugal a right to look to Great Britain as her ally and defender.

This, Sir, being the state, morally and politically, of our obligations towards Portugal, it is obvious that when Portugal, in apprehension of the coming storm, called on Great Britain for assistance, the only hesitation on our part could be,—not whether that assistance was due, supposing the occasion for demanding it to arise—but simply, whether that occasion—in other words, whether the *casus fœderis*—had arisen.

I understand, indeed, that in some quarters, it has been imputed to His Majesty's Ministers, that an extraordinary delay intervened between the taking of the determination to give

assistance to Portugal, and the carrying of that determination into effect. But how stands the fact?—On Sunday, the 3d of this month, we received from the Portuguese Ambassador a direct and formal demand of assistance against a hostile aggression from Spain. Our answer was—that although rumours had reached us through France, His Majesty's Government had not that accurate information—that official and precise intelligence of facts—on which they could properly found an application to Parliament. It was only on last Friday night that this precise information arrived. On Saturday His Majesty's confidential servants came to a decision. On Sunday that decision received the sanction of His Majesty. On Monday, it was communicated to both Houses of Parliament—and this day, Sir,—at the hour in which I have the honour of addressing you,—the troops are on their march for embarkation.

I trust then, Sir, that no unseemly delay is imputable to Government. But, undoubtedly, on the other hand, when the claim of Portugal for assistance,—a claim, clear indeed in justice, but at the same time fearfully spreading in its possible consequences, came before us, it was the duty of his Majesty's Government to do nothing on hearsay, The eventual force of the claim was admitted;

but a thorough knowledge of facts was necessary before the compliance with that claim could be granted. The Government here laboured under some disadvantage. The rumours which reached us through Madrid were obviously distorted, to answer partial political purposes; and the intelligence through the press of France, though substantially correct, was, in particulars, vague and contradictory. A measure of grave and serious moment could never be founded on such authority; nor could the Ministers come down to Parliament until they had a confident assurance that the case which they had to lay before the Legislature was true in all its parts.

But there was another reason which induced a necessary caution. In former instances, when Portugal applied to this Country for assistance, the whole power of the State in Portugal was vested in the person of the Monarch. The expression of his wish, the manifestation of his desire, the putting forth of his claim, was sufficient ground for immediate and decisive action, on the part of Great Britain,—supposing the *casus fœderis* to be made out. But, on this occasion, inquiry was in the first place to be made, whether, according to the new Constitution of Portugal, the call upon Great

Britain was made with the consent of all the powers and authorities competent to make it; so as to carry with it an assurance of that reception in Portugal for our army, which the army of a friend and ally had a right to expect. Before a British soldier should put his foot on Portuguese ground, nay, before he should leave the shores of England, it was our duty to ascertain that the step taken by the Regency of Portugal was taken with the cordial concurrence of the Legislature of that Country. It was but this morning that we received intelligence of the proceedings of the Chambers at Lisbon, which establishes the fact of such concurrence. This intelligence is contained in a Despatch from Sir W. A'Court, dated 29th of November, of which I will read an extract to the House. "The day after the news arrived of "the entry of the Rebels into Portugal, the "Ministers demanded from the Chambers an "extension of power for the Executive Go- "vernment; and the permission to apply for "foreign succours, in virtue of ancient "Treaties, in the event of their being deemed "necessary. The Deputies gave the requisite "authority by acclamation; and an equally "good spirit was manifested by the Peers, "who granted every power that the Ministers "could possibly require. They went even "further, and rising in a body from their

" seats, declared their devotion to their Coun-
" try, and their readiness to give their per-
" sonal services, if necessary, to repel any
" hostile invasion. The Duke de Cadaval,
" President of the Chamber, was the first to
" make this declaration: and the Minister
" who described this proceeding to me, said,
" it was a movement worthy of the good days
" of Portugal!"

I have thus incidentally disposed of the supposed imputation of delay in complying with the requisition of the Portuguese Government. The main question however, is this—Was it obligatory upon us to comply with that requisition?—In other words, had the *casus fœderis* arisen?—In our opinion it had. Bands of Portuguese rebels, armed, equipped, and trained in Spain, had crossed the Spanish frontier, carrying terror and devastation into their own country, and proclaiming sometimes the brother of the reigning Sovereign of Portugal, sometimes a Spanish Princess, and sometimes even Ferdinand of Spain, as the rightful occupant of the Portuguese throne. These rebels crossed the frontier, not at one point only, but at several points: for it is remarkable, that the aggression, on which the original application to Great Britain for succour was founded, is not the aggression with reference to which

that application has been complied with. The attack announced by the French newspapers was on the North of Portugal, in the province of Tras-os-Montes; an official account of which has been received by His Majesty's Government only this day. But on Friday an account was received of an invasion in the South of Portugal, and of the capture of Villa Viciosa, a town lying on the road from the southern frontier to Lisbon. This new fact established even more satisfactorily than a mere confirmation of the attack first complained of would have done, the systematic nature of the aggression from Spain against Portugal. One hostile irruption might have been made by some single corps escaping from their quarters,--by some body of stragglers, who might have evaded the vigilance of Spanish authorities; and one such accidental and unconnected act of violence might not have been conclusive evidence of cognizance and design on the part of those authorities. But when a series of attacks are made along the whole line of a frontier, it is difficult to deny that such multiplied instances of hostility are evidence of concerted aggression.

If a single company of *Spanish* soldiers had crossed the frontier in hostile array, there could not, it is presumed, be a doubt

as to the character of that invasion.—Shall bodies of men, armed, clothed, and regimented by Spain, carry fire and sword into the bosom of her unoffending neighbour, and shall it be pretended that no attack, no invasion has taken place, because, forsooth, these outrages are committed against Portugal by men to whom Portugal had given birth and nurture?—What petty quibbling would it be to say, that an invasion of Portugal from Spain was not a *Spanish* invasion, because Spain did not employ her own troops, but hired mercenaries to effect her purpose? and what difference is it, except as aggravation, that the mercenaries in this instance were natives of Portugal?

I have already stated, and I now repeat, that it never has been the wish or the pretension of the British Government to interfere in the internal concerns of the Portuguese nation. Questions of that kind the Portuguese nation must settle among themselves. But if we were to admit that hordes of traitorous refugees from Portugal, with Spanish arms,—or arms furnished or restored to them by Spanish authorities,—in their hands, might put off their country for one purpose, and put it on again for another;—put it off for the purpose of attack, and put it on again for the purpose of impunity;—if,

I say, we were to admit this juggle, and either pretend to be deceived by it ourselves, or attempt to deceive Portugal, into a belief that there was nothing of external attack, nothing of foreign hostility, in such a system of aggression,—such pretence and attempt would perhaps be only ridiculous and contemptible; if they did not acquire a much more serious character from being employed as an excuse for infidelity to ancient friendship, and as a pretext for getting rid of the positive stipulations of treaties.

This, then, is the case which I lay before the House of Commons. Here is, on the one hand, an undoubted pledge of national faith,—not taken in a corner,—not kept secret between the parties—but publicly recorded amongst the annals of history, in the face of the world. Here are, on the other hand, undeniable acts of foreign aggression, perpetrated, indeed, principally through the instrumentality of domestic traitors; but supported with foreign means, instigated by foreign councils, and directed to foreign ends. Putting these facts and this pledge together, it is impossible that His Majesty should refuse the call that has been made upon him; nor can Parliament, I am convinced, refuse to enable His Majesty to fulfil his undoubted obligations. I am willing

to rest the whole question of to-night, and to call for the vote of the House of Commons upon this simple case; divested altogether of collateral circumstances; from which I especially wish to separate it, in the minds of those who hear me, and also in the minds of others, to whom what I now say will find its way. If I were to sit down this moment, without adding another word, I have no doubt but that I should have the concurrence of the House in the Address which I mean to propose.

When I state this, it will be obvious to the House, that the vote for which I am about to call upon them, is a vote for the defence of Portugal, not a vote for war against Spain. I beg the House to keep these two points entirely distinct in their consideration. For the former I think I have said enough. If, in what I have now farther to say, I should bear hard upon the Spanish Government; I beg that it may be observed, that, unjustifiable as I shall shew their conduct to have been—contrary to the law of nations, contrary to the law of good neighbourhood, contrary, I might say, to the laws of God and man,—with respect to Portugal,—still I do not mean to preclude a *locus pœnitentiæ*, a possibility of redress and reparation. It is our duty to fly to the defence of Por-

tugal—be the assailant who he may. And, be it remembered, that, in thus fulfilling the stipulations of ancient Treaties, of the existence and obligation of which all the world are aware, we, according to the universally admitted construction of the law of nations, neither make war upon that assailant, nor give to that assailant, much less to any other power, just cause of war against ourselves.

Sir, the present situation of Portugal is so anomalous, and the recent years of her history are crowded with events so unusual, that the House will, perhaps, not think that I am unprofitably wasting its time, if I take the liberty of calling its attention shortly and succinctly to those events, and to their influence on the political relations of Europe. It is known that the consequence of the residence of the King of Portugal in Brazil, was to raise the latter country from a colonial to a metropolitan condition; and that from the time when the King began to contemplate his return to Portugal, there grew up in Brazil a desire of independence that threatened dissension, if not something like civil contest between the European and American dominions of the House of Braganza. It is known also that Great Britain undertook a mediation between Portugal and Brazil, and induced the King to consent to a separation of

the two Crowns,—confirming that of Brazil on the head of his eldest son. The ink with which this agreement was written was scarcely dry, when the unexpected death of the King of Portugal produced a new state of things, which re-united on the same head the two Crowns which it had been the policy of England, as well as of Portugal, and of Brazil to separate. On that occasion, Great Britain, and another European Court closely connected with Brazil, tendered advice to the Emperor of Brazil, now become King of Portugal; which advice it cannot be accurately said that His Imperial Majesty followed,—because he had decided for himself before it reached Rio de Janeiro; but in conformity with which advice, though not in consequence of it, His Imperial Majesty determined to abdicate the Crown of Portugal in favour of his eldest daughter. But the Emperor of Brazil had done more. What had not been foreseen—what would have been beyond the province of any foreign Power to advise,—His Imperial Majesty had accompanied his abdication of the Crown of Portugal with the grant of a free Constitutional Charter to that Kingdom.

It has been surmised that this measure, as well as the abdication which it accompanied, was the offspring of our advice. No

such thing.—Great Britain did not suggest this measure. It is not her duty nor her practice to offer suggestions for the internal regulation of foreign States. She neither approved nor disapproved of the grant of a Constitutional Charter to Portugal: her opinion upon that grant was never required. True it is, that the instrument of the Constitutional Charter was brought to Europe by a Gentleman of high trust in the service of the British Government. Sir C. Stuart had gone to Brazil to negotiate the separation between that Country and Portugal. In addition to his character of Plenipotentiary of Great Britain, as the mediating Power, he had also been invested by the King of Portugal with the character of His Most Faithful Majesty's Plenipotentiary for the negotiation with Brazil. That negotiation had been brought to a happy conclusion; and therewith the British part of Sir C. Stuart's commission had terminated. But Sir C. Stuart was still resident at Rio de Janeiro, as the Plenipotentiary of the King of Portugal, for negotiating commercial arrangements between Portugal and Brazil. In this latter character it was, that Sir C. Stuart, on his return to Europe, was requested by the Emperor of Brazil to be the bearer to Portugal of the new Constitutional Charter. His Majesty's Government

found no fault with Sir C. Stuart for executing this commission : but it was immediately felt, that if Sir C. Stuart were allowed to remain at Lisbon, it might appear, in the eyes of Europe, that England was the contriver and imposer of the Portuguese Constitution. Sir C. Stuart was, therefore, directed to return home forthwith: in order that the Constitution, if carried into effect there, might plainly appear to be adopted by the Portuguese Nation itself, not forced upon them by English interference.

As to the merits, Sir, of the new Constitution of Portugal, I have neither the intention, nor the right, to offer any opinion. Personally, I may have formed one; but as an English Minister, all I have to say is,—"May God prosper this attempt at the establishment of constitutional liberty in Portugal! and may that Nation be found as fit to enjoy and to cherish its new-born privileges, as it has often proved itself capable of discharging its duties amongst the Nations of the World!"

I, Sir, am neither the champion nor the critic of the Portuguese Constitution. But it is admitted on all hands to have proceeded from a legitimate source—a consideration which has mainly reconciled Continental Europe to its establishment: and to us, as Englishmen,

it is recommended, by the ready acceptance which it has met with from all orders of the Portuguese people. To that Constitution, therefore, thus unquestioned in its origin, even by those who are most jealous of new institutions,—to that Constitution, thus sanctioned in its outset by the glad and grateful acclamations of those who are destined to live under it,—to that Constitution, founded on principles in a great degree similar to those of our own, though differently modified, —it is impossible that Englishmen should not wish well. But it would not be for us to force that Constitution on the people of Portugal, if they were unwilling to receive it,—or if any schism should exist amongst the Portuguese themselves, as to its fitness and congeniality to the wants and wishes of the nation. It is no business of ours to fight its battles. We go to Portugal in the discharge of a sacred obligation, contracted under ancient and modern Treaties. When there, nothing shall be done by us to enforce the establishment of the Constitution;—but we must take care that nothing shall be done by others to prevent it from being fairly carried into effect. Internally, let the Portuguese settle their own affairs; but with respect to external force, while Great Britain has an arm to raise, it must be raised against

the efforts of any Power that should attempt forcibly to controul the choice, and fetter the independence of Portugal.

Has such been the intention of Spain? Whether the proceedings which have lately been practised or permitted in Spain, were acts of a Government exercising the usual power of prudence and foresight, (without which, a Government is, for the good of the people which live under it, no Government at all,) or whether they were the acts of some secret illegitimate power—of some furious fanatical faction, over-riding the counsels of the ostensible Government, defying it in the capital, and disobeying it on the frontiers,—I will not stop to inquire.—It is indifferent to Portugal, smarting under her wrongs,—it is indifferent to England, who is called upon to avenge them,—whether the present state of things be the result of the intrigues of a faction, over which, if the Spanish Government has no controul, it ought to assume one as soon as possible,—or of local authorities, over whom it has controul, and for whose acts it must, therefore, be held responsible. It matters not, I say, from which of these sources the evil has arisen. In either case, Portugal must be protected; and from England that protection is due.

It would be unjust, however, to the Spanish

Government, to say, that it is only amongst the members of that Government that an unconquerable hatred of liberal institutions exists in Spain. However incredible the phenomenon may appear in this country, I am persuaded that a vast majority of the Spanish Nation entertain a decided attachment to arbitrary power, and a predilection for absolute government. The more liberal institutions of countries in their neighbourhood have not yet extended their influence into Spain, nor awakened any sympathy in the mass of the Spanish people. Whether the public authorities of Spain did or did not partake of the national sentiment, there would almost necessarily grow up between Portugal and Spain, under present circumstances, an opposition of feelings, which it would not require the authority or the suggestions of the Government to excite and stimulate into action. Without blame, therefore, to the Government of Spain,—out of the natural antipathy between the two neighbouring nations—the one prizing its recent freedom, the other hugging its traditionary servitude—there might arise mutual provocations, and reciprocal injuries which, perhaps, even the most active and vigilant Ministry could not altogether restrain. I am inclined to believe that such has been, in part at least, the origin of the dif-

ferences between Spain and Portugal. That in their progress they have been adopted, matured, methodized, combined, and brought into more perfect action, by some authority more united and more efficient than the mere feeling disseminated through the mass of the community, is certain; but I do believe their origin to have been as much in the real sentiment of the Spanish population, as in the opinion or contrivance of the Government itself.

Whether this be or be not the case, is precisely the question between us and Spain. If, though partaking in the general feelings of the Spanish Nation, the Spanish Government has, nevertheless, done nothing to embody those feelings, and to direct them hostilely against Portugal; if all that has occurred on the frontiers, has occurred only because the vigilance of the Spanish Government has been surprised, its confidence betrayed, and its orders neglected —if its engagements have been repeatedly and shamefully violated, not by its own good will, but against its recommendation and desire—let us see some symptoms of disapprobation, some signs of repentance, some measures indicative of sorrow for the past, and of sincerity for the future. In that case His Majesty's Message, to which I propose this night to return an answer of concurrence, will retain the character which I

have ascribed to it,—that of a measure of defence for Portugal, not a measure of resentment against Spain.

With these explanations and qualifications, let us now proceed in the review of facts. Great desertions took place from the Portuguese army into Spain, and some desertions took place from the Spanish army into Portugal. In the first instance, the Portuguese authorities were taken by surprise; but, in every subsequent instance, where they had an opportunity of exercising a discretion, it is but just to say, that they uniformly discouraged the desertions of the Spanish soldiery. There exist between Spain and Portugal specific treaties, stipulating the mutual surrender of deserters. Portugal had, therefore, a right to claim of Spain that every Portuguese deserter should be forthwith sent back. I hardly know whether from its own impulse, or in consequence of our advice, the Portuguese Government waved its right under those treaties; very wisely reflecting, that it would be highly inconvenient to be placed by the return of their deserters, in the difficult alternative of either granting a dangerous amnesty, or ordering numerous executions. The Portuguese Government, therefore, signified to Spain that it would be entirely satisfied if, instead of surrendering the deserters, Spain would restore their arms, horses,

and equipments; and, separating the men from their officers, would remove both from the frontiers into the interior of Spain. Solemn engagements were entered into by the Spanish Government to this effect—first with Portugal, next with France, and afterwards with England. Those engagements, concluded one day, were violated the next. The deserters, instead of being disarmed and dispersed, were allowed to remain congregated together near the frontiers of Portugal; where they were enrolled, trained, and disciplined, for the expedition which they have since undertaken. It is plain that in these proceedings, there was perfidy somewhere. It rests with the Spanish Government to show, that it was not with them. It rests with the Spanish Government to prove, that if its engagements have not been fufilled—if its intentions have been eluded and unexecuted, the fault has not been with the Government; and that it is ready to make every reparation in its power.

I have said that these promises were made to France and to Great Britain, as well as to Portugal. I should do a great injustice to France if I were not to add, that the representations of that Government upon this point, with the Cabinet of Madrid, have been as urgent, and, alas! as fruitless, as those of

Great Britain. Upon the first irruption into the Portuguese territory, the French Government testified its displeasure by instantly recalling its ambassador; and it further directed its Chargé d'Affaires to signify to his Catholic Majesty, that Spain was not to look for any support from France against the consequences of this aggression upon Portugal. I am bound, I repeat, in justice to the French Government, to state, that It has exerted Itself to the utmost, in urging Spain to retrace the steps which she has so unfortunately taken. It is not for me to say whether any more efficient course might have been adopted to give effect to their exhortations: but as to the sincerity and good faith of the exertions made by the Government of France, to press Spain to the execution of her engagements, I have not the shadow of a doubt:—and I confidently reckon upon their continuance.

It will be for Spain, upon knowledge of the step now taken by His Majesty, to consider in what way she will meet it. The earnest hope and wish of His Majesty's Government is, that she may meet it in such a manner as to avert any ill consequences to herself, from the measure into which we have been driven by the unjust attack upon Portugal.

Sir, I set out with saying, that there were reasons which entirely satisfied my judgment that

nothing short of a point of national faith or national honour, would justify at the present moment, any voluntary approximation to the possibility of war. Let me be understood, however, distinctly, as not meaning to say that I dread war in a good cause, (and in no other may it be the lot of this Country ever to engage !) from a distrust of the strength of the Country to commence it, or of her resources to maintain it. I dread it, indeed,—but upon far other grounds : I dread it from an apprehension of the tremendous consequences which might arise from any hostilities in which we might now be engaged. Some years ago, in the discussion of the negociations respecting the French war against Spain, I took the liberty of adverting to this topic. I then stated that the position of this Country in the present state of the world, was one of neutrality, not only between contending nations, but between conflicting principles; and that it was by neutrality alone that we could maintain that balance, the preservation of which, I believed to be essential to the welfare of mankind. I then said, that I feared that the next war which should be kindled in Europe, would be a war not so much of armies, as of opinions. Not four years have elapsed, and behold my appre-

hension realised! It is, to be sure, within narrow limits that this war of opinion is at present confined: but it *is* a war of opinion, that Spain, (whether as Government or as Nation) is now waging against Portugal; it is a war which has commenced in hatred of the new institutions of Portugal. How long is it reasonable to expect that Portugal will abstain from retaliation? If into that war this Country shall be compelled to enter, we shall enter into it, with a sincere and anxious desire to mitigate rather than exasperate,—and to mingle only in the conflict of arms, not in the more fatal conflict of opinions. But I much fear that this Country, (however earnestly she may endeavour to avoid it,) could not, in such case, avoid seeing ranked under her banners all the restless and dissatisfied of any nation with which she might come in conflict. It is the contemplation of this new *power* in any future war, which excites my most anxious apprehension. It is one thing to have a giant's strength, but it would be another to use it like a giant. The consciousness of such strength is, undoubtedly, a source of confidence and security; but in the situation in which this Country stands, our business is not to seek opportunities of displaying it, but to content ourselves with letting the professors

of violent and exaggerated doctrines on both sides feel, that it is not their interest to convert an umpire into an adversary. The situation of England, amidst the struggle of political opinions which agitates more or less sensibly different countries of the world, may be compared to that of the Ruler of the Winds, as described by the poet:—

——" Celsâ sedet Æolus arce,
Sceptra tenens; mollitque animos et temperat iras;
Ni faciat, maria ac terras cælumque profundum
Quippe ferant rapidi secum, verrantque per auras."

The consequence of letting loose the passions at present chained and confined, would be to produce a scene of desolation which no man can contemplate without horror; and I should not sleep easy on my couch, if I were conscious that I had contributed to precipitate it by a single moment.

This, then, is the reason—a reason very different from fear—the reverse of a consciousness of disability,—why I dread the recurrence of hostilities in any part of Europe; why I would bear much, and would forbear long; why I would (as I have said) put up with almost any thing that did not touch national faith and national honour;—rather than let slip the furies of war, the leash of which we hold in our hands,—not knowing whom

they may reach, or how far their ravages may be carried. Such is the love of peace which the British Government acknowledges; and such the necessity for peace which the circumstances of the world inculcate. I will push these topics no farther.

I return, in conclusion, to the object of the Address. Let us fly to the aid of Portugal, by whomsoever attacked; because it is our duty to do so: and let us cease our interference where that duty ends. We go to Portugal, not to rule, not to dictate, not to prescribe constitutions—but to defend and to preserve the independence of an ally. We go to plant the standard of England on the well-known heights of Lisbon. Where that standard is planted, foreign dominion shall not come.

The Speaker read the Address, which was received with much applause, and put the question that it be adopted.

Sir Robert Wilson: No man was more fully persuaded than himself, that, on an occasion like the present, His Majesty was actuated by the just pride of a British King, conscious that he was ruling a people who esteemed the maintenance of good faith and national honour the brightest gem of his crown. As, however, the King could only act by his confidential advisers, he (Sir R. W.) felt great anxiety upon this subject, and, knowing, as he did, the unexampled treachery and continued aggressions by Spain upon Portugal, he had been unable to controul his impatience, and had, there-

fore, given notice of a motion, the chief object of which was to obtain information. After the statement of to-night, proving at once the vigour, decision, and energy of Ministers, his anxiety only was, to see them carry their own purposes into execution, and thus save him the pain of an accusatory attack. At the same time, he thought *Great Britain was bound to require of France that she should march her troops out of Spain*, as a first step to the defence of Portugal. She had entered Spain merely to release the King, and to restore peace, and that object had long ago been accomplished.

Mr. HUME opposed the Address, principally on the ground that this country was not in a situation to enter upon, and long maintain a war on a great scale. He further contended, that war should not be entered into, unless a strong case of necessity was made out. He had the admission of the right hon. gentleman for saying this, and it was highly inconsistent in him, who was the advocate of this doctrine in 1823, to precipitate the country into a war now, without either affording sufficient time for deliberation, or establishing a case of unavoidable necessity to enter into it. The hon. member moved an amendment, "that the House be called over this day week."

Mr. WOOD, (of Preston,) seconded the amendment.

Mr. BARING observed, that when the possibility of our being soon engaged in a war came to be considered, he had much dreaded the hazard of being plunged into a war on one day, which the country might have to lament on another; and he had been most anxious that some means of evasion could have been found out, by which war might have been avoided. But, such a very

strong case had been made out, that he was not surprised at the approbation with which the proposition of this night had been almost unanimously received. He asked what great nation had ever accomplished any valuable purpose by an over submissive and pusillanimous policy? They need not talk to him about a Property Tax and Bank Restriction Acts. The question was, whether our faith was bound? and if it was, then we must fulfil our obligations. If the House had the baseness to declare itself broken-hearted, and afraid of war, sure he was that such a resolution would be disgusting and revolting to the feelings of the country. But still he confessed he could not understand how we could fully discharge our duty to Portugal, and yet avoid committing aggressions on Spain. Suppose Government were to send out Mina with a train of artillery, would not that be an aggression on Spain? In addition to the general question, as one of public faith, there was another consideration important to this country. No doubt we were bound to Portugal by solemn engagements, from which, whether burthensome or not, it was impossible for us at this moment to release ourselves. But if we were not, it would not the less be a great essential paramount act of policy on the part of this country to maintain and uphold the independence of Portugal. He had viewed, with the greatest possible jealousy and disgust, the state in which the Peninsula had been during the last four years. He could not help regretting that Government had *looked so passively on the invasion of Spain in* 1823. *If, at that time, the same resolution had been shewn in the case of Spain, as was at this time in the case of Portugal, Europe would have been saved from that calamity into which, at some time or other, he firmly believed that inva-*

*sion would draw it.* The French Minister, it appeared, had left Madrid; all the forms had been duly gone through; the only question was, the sincerity of the French Government. He suspected there was a party behind, whether French or Russian, he knew not, telling the Spanish party, "Never mind what we say, we are really your friends and will back you." Whether France was sincere or not, it was the duty of the British Government to take the course that good faith marked out to it. The resources of the country had been alluded to; but that was a question which, on such an occasion as this, could never be raised while the country remained a power worth speaking of. When a case was fairly made out, involving our honour, it was impossible to suffer any consideration to be put in competition with it. But *he could not view the possession of Spain by France, continued year after year, without feeling that it was extremely dangerous to this country.* Spain was evidently just as far from getting rid of her subjection to France, as she was the first year of her occupation. If, then, this country suffered the invasion of Portugal, the whole coast of the Peninsula would fall under the influence of France; and thus Portugal through Spain, and Spain through France, would be under subjection to that power from which England had the most dread. The friendly disposition of any country was but a bad security for the national interests of this. We had the assurance of France that that power would remain at peace; but that was what he would not be satisfied with. Could he trust to the family of Bourbon to refrain from effecting that which had constituted the highest object of the ambition of Louis XIV., and afterwards of Napoleon, and which at this time seemed almost secured to them

by accident, perhaps, but he believed also in some degree by design? To what degree the war, once commenced, might spread, in point of expence and extent, there was no saying beforehand. He did not apprehend it would be of any very enormous description; and when the House bore in mind the taxes repealed since the conclusion of the war, he denied that the pressure at this time could be such as to render us incapable of bearing the burthens war would bring upon us. The Right Honourable Gentleman, he was satisfied, had taken the only course that was open to him.

Mr. BANKES, senior, was of opinion that the House should be assured that *the war was quite indispensable*, before they rushed into it. Not all the eloquence of the Right Honourable Secretary had satisfied him *that that was the case*. The disturbances in Portugal were of a political character, and connected with its internal arrangements. He did not shrink from war because he despaired of the resources of the country, and, therefore, he would not support the Amendment, but neither could he vote for the original motion.

Mr. BROUGHAM supported the Address in an eloquent and impressive speech. Adverting to the ground on which the amendment was principally supported, he said, "The honourable members (Messrs. HUME and WOOD) must recollect, and the House and the country must bear in mind, that the question is not at present, whether, even at the expence of your character for good faith, you will consent to bear hereafter among mankind a stained reputation, and a forfeited honour. The question is not whether you will do so, and by so doing avert a war. I should say no, even if this choice were within your reach; but

the question is whether, for a little season of miserable, insecure, precarious, dishonourable, unbearable truce.—I cannot call it peace, for it has nothing of the honour and the comfort which make the name of peace proverbially sweet—I say, the question is, whether for this wretched, precarious, disgusting, and intolerable postponement of hostilities, you will be content hereafter to have recourse to war, when war can no longer be avoided, and when its horrors will fall upon you—degraded and ruined in character in the eyes of all the nations of Europe, and, what is ten thousand times worse, degraded and ruined in your own. I say, Sir, degraded and ruined in reputation, and what may appear worse to those to whose minds such topics do not find so easy an access, the war will fall with tenfold weight upon our resources; for a small sum spent now in due time, may be the means of saving us an expenditure of ten times that amount, with interest—aye, and compound interest accumulated upon it. The risking of a thousand men, dreadful as that alternative is, may prevent the renewal of the horrors of war on a more extended scale; it may avert a war in which we may have to engage hereafter with crippled resources—a war of boundless expenditure, in which other powers as well as Spain may be prepared to take a part; a war of which it may indeed be said, that when it is once begun no man can pretend to prescribe its limits. I entirely agree in all that has been said of the hazards and difficulties inseparable from war, and I was certainly one of those who held, some years ago, that looking to the burthens under which this country laboured, we were under severe recognizances to keep the peace. I know the severity of these burthens; but if I feel their weight, if I feel apprehensive, as who must

not, of their effect, in case this most necessary measure—a measure which, upon all reasonable probabilities, must prove effectual—should, unhappily fail, I cannot but rely on those sound, enlightened, liberal, and truly English principles —principles worthy of our best times, and of our most distinguished statesmen, which now govern the councils of this country in her foreign policy, and inspire the eloquence of the right honourable Secretary with a degree of fervour, energy, and effect, extrordinary and unprecedented in this House—unprecedented, (I can give it no higher praise) even in the eloquence of the right honourable gentleman. I feel that in these principles, now adopted and avowed by the organs of our Government, we have a strong and impregnable bulwark, which will enable us not only to support our burthens, and, should the day of trial come upon us, to meet the combined world in arms, but which will afford the strongest practical security against future danger; and render it eminently improbable that we shall ever have that combined world to contend with, so long as those principles are maintained. Our burthens may remain, but our Government know that when the voice of the people is in their favour, they have a lever, if not within their hands, within their grasp. I will imitate the discretion of the Secretary, and go no further. We know, because we have experienced the extent of that power; our enemies that would be, but who, on this account, will not be so, know it, because they see its effect here, and dread its effect among themselves. If, however, that catastrophe, which His Majesty's Ministers have taken the best means to avert, and which, in all human probability, will be averted, should unhappily fall upon us, whatever may be our burthens, whatever may be the difficulties with

which we may have to contend, let but His Majesty's Government act steadily up to the principles they have avowed, and let the country but remain true to itself, and I have no fear of the rest.

Mr. BRIGHT contended that no act of aggression against Portugal had been avowed by Spain, and that consequently no *casus fœderis* existed, and we were not bound by the terms of the treaty to embark in hostilities. The occupation of Portugal by 5,000 men would amount to nothing more than an armed neutrality. Now, by the terms of the treaty, we were only bound to assist Portugal in the event of actual hostilities having been commenced, and *then* we were bound to attack Spain with all our might.—*Extracted from the Morning Chronicle.*

# MR. CANNING'S REPLY.

I rise, Sir, for the purpose of making a few observations, not so much in answer to any general arguments, as in reply to two or three particular objections which have been urged against the Address which I have had the honour to propose to the House.

In the first place, I frankly admit to my honourable friend,* the member for Dorsetshire, that I have understated the case against Spain,—I have done so designedly, —I warned the House that I would do so,— because I wished no further to impeach the conduct of Spain, than was necessary for establishing the *casus fœderis* on behalf of Portugal. To have gone further—to have made a full statement of the case against Spain,—would have been to preclude the very object which I have in view; that of enabling Spain to preserve peace without dishonour.

The honourable gentleman† who spoke last, indeed, in his extreme love for peace, proposes expedients which, as it appears to me, would render war inevitable. He would avoid interference at this moment, when Spain may

* Mr. Bankes. † Mr. Bright.

be yet hesitating as to the course which she shall adopt; and the language which he would hold to Spain is, in effect, this—"You have not yet done enough to implicate British faith, and to provoke British honour. You have not done enough, in merely enabling Portuguese rebels to invade Portugal, and to carry destruction into her cities; you have not done enough in combining knots of traitors, whom—after the most solemn engagements to disarm and to disperse them—you carefully re-assembled, and equipped and sent back with Spanish arms, to be plunged into kindred Portuguese bosoms. I will not stir for all these things. Pledged though I am by the most solemn obligations of treaty to resent attack upon Portugal as injurious to England, I love too dearly the peace of Europe to be goaded into activity by such trifles as these.—No.—But give us a good declaration of war, and then I'll come and fight you with all my heart."—This is the honourable gentleman's contrivance for keeping peace. The more clumsy contrivance of His Majesty's Government is this:—"We have seen enough, to show to the world that Spain authorised, if she did not instigate, the invasion of Portugal; and we say to Spain, "Beware; we will avenge the cause of our ally, if you break out into declared war; but, in

the mean time, we will take effectual care to frustrate your concealed hostilities." I appeal to my honourable friend, the member for Dorsetshire, whether he does not prefer this course of His Majesty's Government, the object of which is to nip growing hostilities in the ear, to that of the gallant and chivalrous member for Bristol, who would let aggressions ripen into full maturity, in order that they may then be mowed down with the scythe of a magnificent war.

My honourable friend* will now see why it is that no Papers have been laid before the House. The facts which call for our interference in behalf of Portugal, are notorious as the noon-day sun. That interference is our whole present object. To prove more than is sufficient for that object, by Papers laid upon the table of this House, would have been to preclude Spain from that *locus penitentiæ* which we are above all things desirous to preserve to her. It is difficult, perhaps, with the full knowledge which the Government must in such cases possess, to judge what exact portion of that knowledge should be meted out for our present purpose, without hazarding an exposure which might carry us too far. I know not how far I have succeeded in this

* Mr. Bankes.

respect; but I can assure the House, that if the time should unfortunately arrive when a further exposition shall become necessary, it will be found, that it was not for want of evidence that my statement of this day has been defective.

An Amendment has been proposed, purporting a delay of a week, but in effect, intended to produce a total abandonment of the object of the Address; and that Amendment has been justified by a reference to the conduct of the Government and to the language used by me in this House, between three and four years ago. It is stated, and truly, that I did not then deny that cause for war had been given by France in the invasion of Spain, if we had then thought fit to enter into war on that account. But it seems to be forgotten that there is one main difference between that case and the present,—which difference, however, is essential and all-sufficient. We were then to go to war, if we pleased, on grounds of political expediency. But we were not then bound to interfere, on behalf of Spain, as we now are bound to interfere on behalf of Portugal, by the obligations of treaty. War might then have been our free choice, if we had deemed it politic: interference on behalf of Portugal is now our duty, unless we are prepared to

abandon the principles of national faith and national honour. It is a singular confusion of intellect which confounds two cases so precisely dissimilar. Far from objecting to the reference to 1823, I refer to that same occasion to show the consistency of the conduct of myself and my Colleagues. We were then accused of truckling to France, from a pusillanimous dread of war. We pleaded guilty to the charge of wishing to avoid war. We described its inexpediency, its inconveniences, and its dangers,—(dangers, especially of the same sort with those which I have hinted at to-day); but we declared that although we could not overlook those dangers, those inconveniences, and that inexpediency, in a case in which remote interest and doubtful policy were alone assigned as motives for war; we would cheerfully affront them all, in a case,—if it should arrive,—where national faith or national honour were concerned. Well, then,—a case *has* now arisen, of which the essence is faith, of which the character is honour. And when we call upon Parliament, not for offensive war,—which was proposed to us in 1823,—but for defensive armament; we are referred to our abstinence in 1823, as disqualifying us for exertion at the present moment: and are told, that because we did not attack France

on that occasion, we must not defend Portugal on this. I, Sir, like the proposers of the Amendment, place the two cases of 1823 and 1826, side by side, and deduce from them, when taken together, the exposition and justification of our general policy. I appeal from the warlike preparations of to-day, to the forbearance of 1823, in proof of the pacific character of our counsels;—I appeal from the imputed tameness of 1823, to the Message of to-night, in illustration of the nature of those motives, by which a Government, generally pacific, may nevertheless be justly roused into action.

Having thus disposed of the objections to the Address, I come next to the suggestions of some who profess themselves friendly to the purpose of it, but who would carry that purpose into effect by means which I certainly cannot approve. It has been suggested, Sir, that we should at once ship off the Spanish Refugees, now in this country, for Spain; and that we should, by the repeal of the Foreign Enlistment Act, let loose into the contest all the ardent and irregular spirits of this country. Sir, this is the very suggestion which I have anticipated with apprehension, in any war in which this Country might be engaged, in the present unquiet state of the minds of men in Europe. These are the

expedients, the tremendous character of which I ventured to adumbrate rather than to describe, in the speech with which I prefaced the present Motion,—Such expedients I disclaim. I dread and deprecate the employment of them. So far, indeed, as Spain herself is concerned, the employment of such means would be strictly, I might say, epigrammatically just. The Foreign Enlistment Act was passed in the year 1819, if not at the direct request, for the especial benefit of Spain. What right, then, would Spain have to complain if we should repeal it now, for the especial benefit of Portugal?—The Spanish Refugees have been harboured in this country, it is true; but on condition of abstaining from hostile expeditions against Spain: and more than once, when such expeditions have been planned, the British Government has interfered to suppress them. How is this tenderness for Spain rewarded?—Spain not only harbours, and fosters, and sustains, but arms, equips, and marshals the traitorous Refugees of Portugal, and pours them by thousands into the bosom of Great Britain's nearest Ally. So far, then, as Spain is concerned, the advice of those who would send forth against Spain such dreadful elements of strife and destruction, is, as I have admitted, not unjust. But I repeat, again and again, that I disclaim all

such expedients;—and that I dread especially a war with Spain, because it is the war of all others in which, by the example and practice of Spain herself, such expedients are most likely to be adopted. Let us avoid that war if we can,—that is, if Spain will permit us to do so. But in any case, let us endeavour to strip any war—if war we must have—of that formidable and disastrous character which the honourable and learned gentleman* has so eloquently described; and which I was happy to hear him concur with me in deprecating, as the most fatal evil by which the world could be afflicted.

Sir, there is another suggestion with which I cannot agree, although brought forward by two honourable Members†, who have, in the most handsome manner, stated their reasons for approving of the line of conduct now pursued by His Majesty's Government. Those honourable members insist that the French army in Spain has been, if not the cause, the encouragement, of the late attack by Spain against Portugal; that His Majesty's Government were highly culpable in allowing that army to enter into Spain, that its stay there is highly injurious to British interests and

* Mr. Brougham. † Sir R. Wilson & Mr. Baring.

honour, and that we ought instantly to call upon France to withdraw it.

There are, Sir, so many considerations connected with these propositions that were I to enter into them all, they would carry me far beyond what is either necessary or expedient to be stated on the present occasion. Enough, perhaps, it is for me to say, that I do not see how the withdrawing of the French troops from Spain, could effect our present purpose. I believe, Sir, that the French army in Spain is now a protection to that very party which it was originally called in to put down. Were the French army suddenly removed at this precise moment, I verily believe that the immediate effect of that removal would be, to give full scope to the unbridled rage of a fanatical faction, before which, in the whirlwind of intestine strife, the party least in numbers would be swept away.

So much for the *immediate* effect of the demand which it is proposed to us to make, if that demand were instantly successful. But when with reference to the larger question of a military occupation of Spain by France, it is averred, that by that occupation the relative situation of Great Britain and France is altered; that France is thereby exalted and Great Britain lowered, in the eyes of

Europe ;—I must beg leave to say, that I dissent from that averment. The House knows—the Country knows—that when the French Army was on the point of entering Spain, His Majesty's Government did all in their power to prevent it; that we resisted it by all means, short of war. I have just now stated some of the reasons why we did not think the entry of that army into Spain a sufficient ground for war; but there was, in addition to those which I have stated, this peculiar reason,—that whatever effect a war, commenced upon the mere ground of the entry of a French army into Spain, might have, it probably would not have had the effect of getting that army out of Spain. In a war against France at that time, as at any other, you might, perhaps, have acquired military glory; you might, perhaps, have extended your colonial possessions; you might even have achieved, at great cost of blood and treasure, an honourable peace; but as to getting the French out of Spain, *that* would have been the one object which you almost certainly would not have accomplished. How seldom, in the whole history of the wars of Europe, has any war between two great Powers ended, in the obtaining of the exact, the identical object for which the war was begun!

Besides, Sir, I confess I think, that the ef-

fects of the French occupation of Spain have been infinitely exaggerated.

I do not blame those exaggerations; because I am aware that they are to be attributed to the recollections of some of the best times of our history; that they are the echoes of sentiments, which in the days of William and of Anne, animated the debates and dictated the votes of the British Parliament. No peace was in those days thought safe for this Country while the crown of Spain continued on the head of a Bourbon. But were not the apprehensions of those days greatly overstated?—Has the power of Spain swallowed up the power of maritime England?—Or does England still remain, after the lapse of more than a century, during which the Crown of Spain has been worn by a Bourbon,—niched in a nook of that same Spain—Gibraltar; an occupation which was contemporaneous with the apprehensions that I have described, and which has happily survived them?

Again, Sir,—is the Spain of the present day the Spain of which the Statesmen of the times of William and Anne were so much afraid? Is it indeed the Nation whose puissance was expected to shake England from her sphere? No, Sir, it was quite another Spain—it was the Spain, within the limits of whose empire the sun never set—it was Spain

"*with the Indies*" that excited the jealousies and alarmed the imaginations of our ancestors.

But then, Sir, the balance of power!—The entry of the French army into Spain disturbed that balance, and we ought to have gone to war to restore it! I have already said, that when the French army entered Spain, we might, if we chose, have resisted or resented that measure by war. But were there no other means than war for restoring the balance of power?—Is the balance of power a fixed and unalterable standard? Or is it not a standard perpetually varying, as civilization advances, and as new nations spring up, and take their place among established political communities? The balance of power a century and a half ago was to be adjusted between France and Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, and England. Some years afterwards, Russia assumed her high station in European politics. Some years after that again, Prussia became not only a substantive, but a preponderating monarchy. Thus, while the balance of power continued in principle the same, the means of adjusting it became more varied and enlarged. They became enlarged, in proportion to the increased number of considerable States,—in proportion, I may say, to the number of weights which might be shifted into the one or the

other scale. To look to the policy of Europe, in the times of William and Anne, for the purpose of regulating the balance of power in Europe at the present day, is to disregard the progress of events, and to confuse dates and facts which throw a reciprocal light upon each other.

It would be disingenuous, indeed, not to admit that the entry of the French army into Spain, was in a certain sense, a disparagement—an affront to the pride,—a blow to the feelings of England:—and it can hardly be supposed that the Government did not sympathize, on that occasion, with the feelings of the people. But I deny that, questionable or censurable as the act might be, it was one which necessarily called for our direct and hostile opposition. Was nothing then to be done?—Was there no other mode of resistance, than by a direct attack upon France—or bya war to be undertaken on the soil of Spain? What, if the possession of Spain might be rendered harmless in rival hands—harmless as regarded us—and valueless to the possessors? Might not compensation for disparagement be obtained, and the policy of our ancestors vindicated, by means better adapted to the present time? If France occupied Spain, was it necessary, in order to avoid the consequences of that occupation,—

that we should blockade Cadiz? No. I looked another way—I sought materials of compensation in another hemisphere, Contemplating Spain, such as our ancestors had known her, I resolved that if France had Spain, it should not be Spain "*with the Indies.*" I called the New World into existence, to redress the balance of the Old.

It is thus, Sir, that I answer the accusation brought against His Majesty's Government, of having allowed the French army to usurp and to retain the occupation of Spain. That occupation, I am quite confident, is an unpaid, and unredeemed burden to France. It is a burden of which, I verily believe, France would be glad to rid herself. But they know little of the feelings of the French Government, and of the spirit of the French nation, who do not know, that, worthless or burdensome as that occupation may be, the way to rivet her in it, would be, by angry or intemperate representations, to make the continuance of that occupation a point of honour.

I believe, Sir, there is no other subject upon which I need enter into defence or explanation. The support which the Address has received from all parties in the House, has been such as would make it both unseemly and ungrateful in me to trespass unnecessarily upon their patience. In conclusion, Sir, I

shall only once more declare, that the object of the Address, which I propose to you, is not war:—its object is to take the last chance of peace. If you do not go forth, on this occasion to the aid of Portugal, Portugal will be trampled down, to your irretrievable disgrace:—and then will come war in the train of national degradation. If, under circumstances like these, you wait till Spain has matured her secret machinations into open hostility, you will in a little while have the sort of war required by the pacificators:—and who shall say where that war will end?

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The Amendment was then put and negatived, there appearing only three or four supporters for Mr. Hume's proposition, and the original question was then put and carried, with only the same number of dissentients.

THE END.

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